

ACADEMIC PROGRAM PRODUCTIVITY REVIEW

ACTION
Agenda Item F-2
February 5, 2001

Recommendation

- The staff recommends that the council accept the December 15, 2000, updates from the universities' academic program review and commends the universities for their efforts to evaluate low-productivity programs that could be improved or closed.
- The staff recommends that the council reaffirm its strong encouragement to faculty and staff from all academic disciplines to explore ways to share programs through statewide collaboratives (emphasizing the Kentucky Virtual University whenever possible), partnerships within clusters of institutions, or the development of complementary specializations, and commend faculty and staff for their efforts to develop these arrangements.

Background

To date, 126 (22 percent) of the programs identified by the council's review have been designated for closing, 166 programs (29 percent) will be altered, 213 (38 percent) will be retained largely unchanged, and 63 programs (11 percent) will be addressed by June 2001.

The universities continue to review the academic programs initially identified by the council in February 2000 as low-productivity ones (conferring fewer than 12 associate, 12 bachelor's, seven master's, or five doctoral degrees calculated as a five-year average). These thresholds for degree productivity are only an initial screen for identifying low-productivity programs. The council's purpose is to complement – not replace – program reviews already established on campuses.

The universities report that through comprehensive faculty involvement, they continue to alter and improve programs using a variety of methods, including

- Adjusting curricula to better serve the needs of students and prospective employers of program graduates.
- Assisting program faculty in obtaining more external funding for research, instruction, or service.
- Collaborating with other public and private institutions through sharing faculty and other methods.
- Consolidating related programs within an institution.
- Creating more effective articulation and transfer arrangements with secondary schools and the Kentucky Community and Technical College System.
- Developing interdepartmental cooperation.
- Improving advising and mentoring.

- Incorporating continuing education courses.
- Increasing publicity using brochures, posters, and Web sites.
- Increasing recruitment through stronger relationships with secondary schools.
- Integrating distance-learning technologies into program delivery.
- Investing additional resources to create more faculty positions and provide more program- specific financial aid, such as funding for more teaching and research assistants in graduate-level programs.
- Linking to professional organizations.
- Re-identifying programs.

Actions since July 2000 include

- **Eastern Kentucky University** recently implemented a new process of academic program review that has resulted in decisions since July 2000 to discontinue seven additional programs, for a total of 12 program closings. Twenty-two programs will be reviewed during spring 2001.
- **Kentucky State University** recently created and has begun to implement a new process of academic program review. The review of all academic programs should result in significant decisions in spring 2001 to discontinue some and alter others.
- **Morehead State University** decided to discontinue three additional programs since July 2000, for a total of nine program closings. Fifteen altered programs have been required to produce and implement aggressive plans for improvement.
- Since the last report, **Murray State University** decided to retain four additional programs that were under special consideration, to retain a program earlier identified for closing, and to close a program initially to have been kept. Overall, Murray plans to discontinue 21 programs, revise nine programs, retain 47 programs unchanged, and continue the review of four programs in spring 2001.
- **Northern Kentucky University** decided in May 2000 to discontinue seven programs. Four additional programs underwent thorough review in fall 2000 before decisions were made to continue them, three unchanged and one with alterations.
- The **University of Kentucky's** review has resulted in decisions to discontinue 15 programs (three since the last report). Forty-eight programs have undergone significant alteration in the last year, and five programs continue under special review.
- The **University of Louisville** continues to implement the decisions of the Blue Ribbon Commission appointed in fall 1999 to undertake a university-wide process of evaluation and reallocation. Since the last report, one additional low-productivity program has been identified for closing. Two programs identified for closure will be retained. Seven additional programs will be revised. Two programs continue under special attention.
- **Western Kentucky University** is in the third year of an extensive review of academic programs. This review has resulted in decisions to discontinue 21 programs (five additional programs to be

closed since the last report). Twenty-four programs will be revised. Several others must produce plans to increase viability and responsiveness to student needs. Two programs will continue under review in spring 2001.

A chart summarizing institutional decisions is attached.

The council's initial review indicated that foreign languages, teacher education, and visual and performing arts should be the focus of statewide discussions of effectiveness and greater collaboration. In July 2000, the council requested the formation of discipline groups in these areas. These groups consist of faculty and staff at public and private universities, the Kentucky Community and Technical College System, and representatives of the Kentucky Virtual University. Discussions have centered on statewide collaboration among academic programs, including the fullest possible integration of distance learning. These discussions have been led by Murray State University and the University of Kentucky (foreign languages); Eastern Kentucky University, Western Kentucky University, and the University of Louisville (teacher education); and Kentucky State University, Northern Kentucky University, and Morehead State University (visual and performing arts).

Final recommendations from these groups will be submitted by June 30, 2001.

Council meeting agenda items from November 8, 1999, and July 17, 2000, contain additional information about the productivity review process.

**Responses by Institution
December 2000**

Institution	Initial Number of Programs	Programs Under Review	Programs Flagged for Closure	Programs to be Altered	Programs to be Retained	Programs Receiving Special Attention
EKU	149	77	12 16%	3 4%	40 52%	22 29%
KSU	37	30	4 13%	4 13%		26 87%
MoSU	97	46	9 20%	16 35%	20 43%	1 2%
MuSU	140	81	21 26%	9 11%	47 58%	4 5%
NKU	77	30	7 23%	5 17%	17 57%	1 3%
UK	289	126	15 12%	48 38%	58 46%	5 4%
UL	215	96	37 * 39%	49 51%	8 8%	2 2%
WKU	160	78	21 27%	32 41%	23 29%	2 3%
Totals:	1164	564	126 22%	166 29%	213 38%	63 11%

* UL added several new programs to replace some closed programs.